

On Box Hill, TQ181515, in June of the same year a single larva was found under a web on the upperside of a leaf of wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare*, which, when bred proved to be *Zelleria hepariella* Stt. This appears to be a new foodplant for the species in Britain; *Fraxinus* is the only foodplant mentioned by Emmet (1991, in *The Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland* 7(2) Harley Books).

Pediasia contaminella Hb. is a species I have mostly encountered on the coast in Kent and Hampshire, although Goater (1996, *British Pyralid Moths*, Harley Books) gives Middlesex and Hertfordshire as inland counties. I identified this species from Caterham TQ331540 first in vii.1994, and again on 28.vii and 1.viii.1996. Whether this represents its recent arrival in the area or whether it had previously been overlooked is uncertain. At the same locality, between 27.vii and 1.viii.1996 a single *Idaea vulpinaria atrosignaria* Lempke, and four specimens of *Parascotia fuliginaria* Linn. were taken at m.v. Although both species are well known from Surrey (e.g. Skinner, 1984. *Colour Identification guide to the Moths of the British Isles*, Viking), I had encountered neither in over 30 years acquaintance with the Lepidoptera of the eastern border of Surrey.

Finally, also at TQ331540, a large moth sitting on a tree trunk on the night of the 20.x.1995 proved to be a male *Mormo maura* Linn. in reasonable condition and a very unusual date for this species.— ROBERT M. PALMER, Greenburn Cottage, Bucksburn, Aberdeen AB21 9UA.

An early spring sighting of the Camberwell Beauty *Nymphalis antiopa* Linn. (Lep.: Nymphalidae) in Northumberland

Walking east of Morpeth along the northern bank of the River Wansbeck on 8 March 1977 my wife and I observed (and photographed) a Camberwell Beauty butterfly initially sunning itself on a fallen tree trunk and subsequently on the ground leaf litter, over a period of twenty minutes. The location (at grid reference NZ219859) was an open, sunny, but sheltered, area between the river and mixed woodland, which includes mature larch trees. Afterwards it flew off amongst the trees and was not seen again.

The butterfly was in good condition with only a few minor tears at the margins of the hindwings. The pair of subtriangular blotches on each forewing together with the borders of the wings, which are all usually cream coloured, were white.

Most sporadic sightings of the Camberwell Beauty have been in late summer (Chalmers-Hunt, 1977, *Ent. Rec.* 89: 89-105; Pittman, 1995, *Ent. Rec.* 107: 309-310) with spring sightings accounting for only about ten per cent (Bretherton & Emmet, 1989, In: *The Moths and Butterflies of Great*

Britain and Ireland. Vol. 7(1). Harley Books). The present sighting so early in March is strongly suggestive that the butterfly was a 1996 immigrant which had then hibernated somewhere locally over winter. The whitening of the wing borders is consistent with this view.

One can only speculate about the origin of this butterfly. It was observed inland at about 8.7km (as the crow flies) from the North Sea coast. Possibly it crossed the North Sea in the summer or autumn of 1996 and then moved inland following the course of the valley of the River Wansbeck to reach a suitable place in which to hibernate. In the past it has been suggested (Newman, 1955, *The Entomologist*, **88**: 25-27) that the Camberwell Beauty is not a natural immigrant but enters the United Kingdom with imported timber from Scandinavia. Interestingly, there is a sawmill and joinery situated about 1.7km downstream towards Bothal. The results of my enquiries here have been inconclusive. Although the larch logs stacked at the sawmill are home grown, in addition so-called "sawn-joinery" wood is utilised for the construction of sheds and this comes from a wholesale distributor located on the Tyne Dock, South Shields, which, in turn, imports the seasoned and sawn timber from Sweden, Finland and Latvia!

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The occurrence of *Apomyelois bistriatella* (Hulst) ssp. *neophanes* (Durrant) (Lep.: Pyralidae) in Yorkshire with a comment on its flight period.

On the evening of 3 September 1996 in the company of Mr Tony Ezard I visited Skipwith Common, near Selby (VC61) where we operated two m.v. lights in an area dominated by heather and birch. During the course of the evening a very worn brown pyralid moth came to my sheet which, at the time, I suspected would turn out to be *Metriostola betulae* (Goeze). Fortunately my recollection was that recent records of that species in VC61 were very few and so I retained the specimen for verification. It was not until the end of February 1997 that I got round to having another look at the moth, which was a male. An examination of the genitalia showed it to be *Apomyelois bistriatella* (Hulst).

This species has not previously been recorded from any of the five Yorkshire vice-counties. Goater (1986, *British Pyralid moths*) gives the most northerly British locality as Whixall Moss in Shropshire.

The date of capture of my moth appeared to be very late as the standard sources of information (Goater, *op. cit.*; Emmet, 1988, *A Field Guide to the smaller British Lepidoptera*; Parsons, 1993, *A review of the scarce and threatened pyralid moths of Great Britain*) are unanimous in giving the flight